

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MONROV 00518 260422Z

ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 EUR-12 SS-15 SP-02 INR-07 PM-05

/052 W

-----019503 260432Z /61/62

R 231600Z JAN 78

FM AMEMBASSY MONROVIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7835

INFO AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY CONAKRY PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY FREETOWN

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LOME

AMEMBASSY BANJUL

AMEMBASSY DAKAR PRIORITY

S E C R E T MONROVIA 0518

STADIS//////////

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y FOR EO TAGS AND SUBJECT LINE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, LI, GA, GV, TO, SG, IV, XA, XJ

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE GUINEA-SENEGAL-IVORY COAST SUMMIT
MEETING IN MONROVIA

1. WITH URGENT ADMONITIONS TO HELP MAINTAIN SECRECY, GOL
FOREIGN MINISTER C. CECIL DENNIS INFORMED ME JANUARY 20
OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT A MEETING OF THE HEADS OF STATE
OF GUINEA, SENEGAL AND IVORY COAST WILL BE HELD IN
MONROVIA SOMETIME BETWEEN MARCH 15 AND 25, PERHAPS EARLIER,
AT WHICH SEKOU TOURE, LEOPOLD SENGHOR AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY
WOULD PLEDGE THEIR NATIONS TO FORGET THE RECENT

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UNPLEASANTRIES BETWEEN GUINEA AND SENEGAL AND
GUINEA AND IVORY COAST AND BUILD MORE AMICABLE RELATIONS.

2. ACCORDING TO DENNIS, THE IMMEDIATE ORIGINS OF THIS
POSSIBLE RAPPROACHEMENT LAY IN THE DECEMBER 19, 1977
APPEAL BY TOURE TO THE YOUTH OF AFRICA IN GENERAL TO
UNITE TO REDUCE TENSIONS ON THE CONTINENT, AND TO THE

GROWTH OF GUINEA IN PARTICULAR TO "REBUILD THE BRIDGE" WITH THE YOUTH OF SENAGAL AND IVORY COAST, AN APPEAL WHICH CONCLUDED WITH THE ASTONISHING--FOR TOURE--CRY OF "LONG LIVE THE IVORY COAST...LONG LIVE SENEGAL". DENNIS NOTED THAT THIS APPEAL WAS FOLLOWED BY TOURE'S NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE IN WHICH HE ASKED GUINEAN YOUTH, WORKERS AND WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS TO "RE-ESTABLISH THE BRIDGE OF FRATERNAL COOPERATION" WITH SIMILAR ORGANIZATIONS IN SENEGAL AND THE IVORY COAST IN ORDER "TO STRENGTHEN THE COMMON WILL OF THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE IVORY COAST, SENEGAL AND GUINEA TO SETTLE ONCE AND FOR ALL THE AFTER-EFFECTS OF THEIR DIFFERENCES".

3. AT THIS POINT, DENNIS CONTINUED, PRESIDENT TOLBERT, WHO HAD LONG USED EACH CONTACT WITH TOURE, SENGHOR AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY TO ADVOCATE ABOLITION OF OLD ANIMOSITIES, COMMENDED TOURE (PROBABLY DURING VISIT TO MONROVIA JANUARY 9 OF GUINEAN FOREIGN MINISTER SISSOKO) FOR HIS PUBLICLY EXPRESSED DETERMINATION TO SEEK BETTER RELATIONS WITH SENEGAL AND IVORY COAST. ACCORDING TO DENNIS, TOURE REPLIED THAT IT WAS TIME FOR THE THREE LEADERS TO GET TOGETHER, THAT TOLBERT SHOULD TAKE THE INITIATIVE, AND THAT THE ONLY CAPITAL IN WHICH ALL COULD AGREE TO MEET WOULD BE MONROVIA. DENNIS SAID THAT HE THEN VISITED DAKAR AND ABIDJAN JANUARY 13-17 TO CONSULT WITH SENGHOR AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY. SENGHOR
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TOLD HIM THAT HE WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO A GESTURE FROM TOURE PROVIDED THAT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY WOULD ALSO ATTEND ANY HEADS OF STATE MEETING PROPOSED. SENGHOR NOTED THAT HE WAS OCCUPIED BY PREPARATIONS FOR THE FEBRUARY 26 ELECTIONS AND SUGGESTED A MEETING DATE BETWEEN MARCH 15 AND MARCH 25. HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY WAS ALSO RECEPTIVE, AS SHOWN BY HIS PRESS CONFERENCE STATEMENT JANUARY 15, THAT "WE SHALL CONSIDER GUINEA AS A SISTER STATE. WE HAVE NOT SPARED ANY EFFORT TO MEET WITH SEKOU TOURE".

4. DENNIS SAID THAT THE VISIT OF GUINEAN PRIME MINISTER BEAVOGUI TO MONROVIA JANUARY 13 WAS TO CONFIRM THAT TOURE HAD NO PRE-CONDITIONS TO THE PROPOSED MEETING OF HEADS OF STATE, AND THAT HE TRULY INTENDED THAT BY-GONES BE BY-GONES. TOURE--BEAVOGUI TOLD THE GOL--WANTED TOLBERT TO REASSURE HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AND SENGHOR THAT TOURE WOULD MAKE NO REFERENCE TO THE PAST AND THAT HE WANTED TO BUILD TOWARD A FUTURE OF AMICABLE RELATIONS.

5. TOURE HAS NOW SUGGESTED THAT THE MEETING BE HELD EARLIER THAN SOMETIME BETWEEN MARCH 15-25 AND THAT PRESIDENT EYADEMA OF TOGO AND PRESIDENT JAWARA OF THE

GAMBIA ALSO ATTEND. DENNIS SAID THAT HE WOULD BE CONTACTING SENGHOR AND HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY TO OBTAIN THEIR REACTIONS AND THAT HE WAS OPTIMISTIC AN AGREEMENT COULD BE REACHED.

6. DENNIS NOTED THAT PRESS REPORTS OF HIS TRAVELS AMONG THE CAPITALS CONCERNED, AND THE VISITS TO MONROVIA OF GOG FOREIGN MINISTER SISSOKO ON JANUARY 9 AND GOG PRIME MINISTER BEAVOGUI ON JANUARY 13, INEVITABLY BROUGHT IN TRAIN SPECULATION CONCERNING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THESE MOVEMENTS. HE HOPED THAT THE POSSIBILITY OF THIS HEADS OF STATE MEETING WOULD NOT BECOME PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE UNTIL FINAL ARRANGEMENTS HAD BEEN MADE AND URGED OUR COOPERATION. I ASSURED HIM
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THAT THIS WOULD BE CLOSELY HELD, AND REMINDED HIM OF THE GRATITUDE WHICH THE U.S. HAS ALWAYS FELT FOR THE UNREMITTING EFFORTS OF PRESIDENT TOLBERT IN AFRICA AND

THE WORLD TO PROMOTE PEACEFUL AND JUST RESOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL DIFFERENCES.

7. COMMENT. IN RECENT MONTHS, THERE HAVE BEEN STRAWS IN THE WIND INDICATING A MODERATING OF GUINEAN ANIMOSITY TOWARD ITS NEIGHBORS--AND SPECIFIC IMPROVEMENTS IN RELATIONS WITH FRANCE AND THE U.S. (ALL REFLECTING PERHAPS A REVISED VIEW BY TOURE OF WHERE GUINEA SHOULD PLACE ITSELF IN THE EAST-WEST ALIGNMENT). WHILE EMBASSY CONAKRY IS IN A BETTER POSITION TO COMMENT THAN WE ARE, FROM MONROVIA WE HAVE BEEN WATCHING THESE DEVELOPMENTS AND SHARE WITH OUR LIBERIAN COLLEAGUES THE HOPE THAT TOURE SOME DAY WOULD FIND IT IN GUINEA'S INTERESTS TO FURTHER A WEST AFRICAN RAPPROACHEMENT. FOR LIBERIA, ANY DIMINUTION OF TENSION BETWEEN ITS FRIENDS, SENEGAL AND IVORY COAST, AND ITS TRADITIONAL SOURCE OF ANXIETY, GUINEA, WILL BE WELCOME. ALTHOUGH SEKOU TOURE HAS BEEN IN THE PROCESS OF MODERATING HIS ATTITUDE TOWARD HIS NEIGHBORS, THE PROSPECT OF A NEW CIVILITY IN RELATIONSHIPS--PERHAPS EVEN WARMTH--IS STILL ALMOST ASTONISHING WHEN VIEWED AGAINST THE BITTERNESS AND INVECTIVE WHICH HAD BEEN CHARACTERISTIC FOR SO LONG. FOREIGN MINISTER DENNIS, IN COMMENTING ON THIS, WAS JUBILANT OVER THE PROSPECTS AND ELATED THAT LIBERIA, BY MAINTAINING ITS CREDENTIALS AS DISINTERESTED BROKER WITH ALL PARTIES, HAS BEEN ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO REGIONAL SOLIDARITY.
CARTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: FOREIGN RELATIONS, SUMMIT MEETINGS, INFORMATION CONTROL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978MONROV00518
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: DG PER CORRECTED COPY
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780035-0709, D780039-0386
Format: TEL
From: MONROVIA
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780134/aaaabckg.tel
Line Count: 167
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d9fe24e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: NOFORN, STADIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NOFORN, STADIS
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 25 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3731342
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SUMMIT MEETING PLANS
TAGS: PGOV, PEPR, PINT, GV, SG, IV, LI, GA, TO, XA, XJ
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d9fe24e1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014